

**Listing of the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A method comprising metering discontinuously at least one solid, particulate catalyst and/or process auxiliary into a reactor (5) containing a fluidized bed (11) of particles in an at least partly gaseous medium at prescribed time intervals into the fluidized bed (11) at least one metering point (10), wherein a first fluid stream is in each case introduced into the reactor (5) so that a region having a reduced particle density is formed in the fluidized bed (11) around the at least one metering point (10) and the at least one solid, particulate catalyst and/or process auxiliary is subsequently metered into the region having a reduced particle density, and wherein the first fluid stream is introduced discontinuously for a period of from 0.5 to 60 s and the catalyst is metered in after a delay of from 0.5 to 3 s after commencement of the introduction of the first fluid stream.
2. (Previously amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first fluid stream is a gas stream.
3. (Previously amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first fluid stream is a liquid stream that vaporizes under the conditions prevailing in the reactor (5).
4. (Previously amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the region having a reduced particle density has a particle density of less than  $0.1 \text{ g/cm}^3$ .
5. (Previously amended) The method as claimed in claim 4, wherein the region having a reduced particle density is substantially free of particles.
6. (Canceled).
7. (Canceled).

8. (Previously amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the at least one solid, particulate catalyst is a free-flowing catalyst suitable for the polymerization of  $\alpha$ -olefins.
9. (Previously amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first fluid stream is formed by at least one inert gas selected from the group consisting of C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>3</sub>-alkanes and N<sub>2</sub>.
10. (Previously amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the catalyst is introduced at a distance (x) of at least 1 cm from an interior wall (9) of the reactor (5).
11. (Previously amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the catalyst is introduced into the reactor (5) by means of the first fluid stream.
12. (Previously amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first fluid stream is introduced into the reactor (5) essentially concentrically around the at least one metering point (10) for the catalyst and the catalyst is introduced at the at least one metering point (10) with the aid of a second fluid stream.
13. (Previously amended) The method as claimed in claim 12, wherein the first fluid stream is introduced at a distance (y) of at least 1 cm from the interior wall (9) of the reactor (5).
14. (Currently amended) A continuous polymerization process for preparing ethylene and propylene homopolymers and copolymers comprising polymerizing ethylene, propene or mixtures comprising ethylene or propene and other C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>- $\alpha$ -olefins at from 30 to 150°C and a pressure of from 0.5 to 6 MPa in the presence of at least one solid, particulate catalyst in a gas-phase fluidized-bed reactor (5) containing a fluidized bed (11) of finely divided polymer, wherein a method for metering the at least one solid, particulate catalyst and/or process auxiliary into the reactor (5) containing

the fluidized bed (11) of particles in an at least partly gaseous medium as claimed in claim 1 is employed, ~~the method comprising metering discontinuously the at least one solid, particulate catalyst and/or process auxiliary at prescribed time intervals into the fluidized bed (11) at least one metering point (10), wherein a first fluid stream is in each case introduced into the reactor (5) so that a region having a reduced particle density is formed in the fluidized bed (11) around the at least one metering point (10) and the at least one solid, particulate catalyst and/or process auxiliary or auxiliaries are subsequently metered into the region having a reduced particle density.~~

15. (Currently amended) An apparatus for carrying out a method of metering at least one solid particulate catalyst and/or process auxiliary as claimed in claim 1, the apparatus comprising:

- (i) a gas-phase fluidized-bed reactor (5) containing a fluidized bed (11) of particles in a reactor gas, where the reactor (5) has a wall (9) which is arranged essentially parallel to the flow direction of the reactor gas and bounds the fluidized bed;
- (ii) at least one reservoir unit (1a) for storing the at least one solid, particulate catalyst and/or process auxiliary;
- (iii) a portioning unit (1b) for providing portions of the at least one solid, particulate catalyst and/or process auxiliary in a prescribed amount, which is connected to the at least one reservoir unit (1a) by a first connecting line (7a);
- (iv) a valve unit (1c) for introducing the portions of the at least one solid, particulate catalyst and/or process auxiliary into the fluidized bed of the reactor (5) at the at least one first metering point (10), where the valve unit (1c) is connected to the portioning unit (1b) by a second

connecting line (7b) and is connected to the reactor (5) at the at least one first metering point (10),

(v) a fluid feed line (8a, 8b) through which a fluid can be fed to the reservoir unit (1a) and the second connecting line (7b);

wherein the at least one first metering point (10) is at a distance of at least 1 cm from the wall (9) of the reactor (5).

16. (Previously amended) The apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein the at least one first metering point (10) is at a distance of from 2 to 100 cm from the wall (9) of the reactor (5).
17. (Previously amended) The apparatus as claimed in claim 15 wherein at least one second metering point (12) for a fluid stream is provided essentially in the form of an annulus around the at least one first metering point (10) for the solid, particulate catalyst and/or process auxiliary.
18. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 4, wherein the region having the reduced particle density has a particle density less than  $0.01 \text{ g/cm}^3$ .
19. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the fluid fed through the feed line (8a, 8b) is an inert gas.